Law of the People’s Republic of China on Foreign Relations

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Unofficial English translation prepared for reference only. The official Chinese text prevails.

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Chapter I — General Provisions

Article 1 — This Law is enacted in accordance with the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China for the purposes of developing foreign relations, safeguarding national sovereignty, security, and development interests, protecting the lawful rights and interests of Chinese citizens and legal persons abroad, maintaining and developing relations with foreign countries, promoting exchanges and cooperation with foreign countries in economic, cultural, scientific, technological, and other fields, enhancing friendship with the peoples of all countries, and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Article 2 — This Law applies to the foreign relations activities of the People’s Republic of China. For purposes of this Law, foreign relations activities include the conduct of diplomatic relations with foreign countries, the conclusion of treaties and other international agreements, participation in international organizations and multilateral mechanisms, and other activities relating to international affairs.

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Article 3 — The People's Republic of China adheres to an independent foreign policy of peace and pursues the path of peaceful development. The People's Republic of China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, namely mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. The People's Republic of China promotes the development of a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation.

Article 4 — In conducting foreign relations, the People's Republic of China shall uphold the centralized and unified leadership of the state, the uniformity of foreign policy, and shall abide by the provisions of this Law and other relevant laws.

Article 5 — When conducting foreign relations, state organs, armed forces, political parties, people's organizations, enterprises, public institutions, other social organizations, and citizens shall safeguard national sovereignty, security, and development interests, and shall protect the honor and dignity of the State.

Chapter II — Functions and Powers in Foreign Relations

Article 6 — The National People's Congress (NPC) and its Standing Committee exercise the functions and powers in foreign relations in accordance with the Constitution and laws. The NPC shall decide on issues of war and peace. The NPC Standing Committee shall decide on the ratification and abrogation of treaties and important agreements, manage the work of foreign relations, and perform other functions and powers relating to foreign relations.

Article 7 — The President of the People's Republic of China, on behalf of the People's Republic of China, conducts state activities and exercises the functions and powers in foreign relations in accordance with the Constitution and laws.

Article 8 — The State Council shall administer foreign affairs, conclude treaties and agreements with foreign countries, and exercise other functions and powers in foreign relations in accordance with the Constitution and laws.

Article 9 — The Central Military Commission shall organize and conduct international military exchanges and cooperation and exercise other functions and powers in foreign relations in accordance with the Constitution and laws.

Article 10 — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other central state organs shall, in accordance with the division of duties, carry out foreign relations work within the scope of their respective functions and powers.

Article 11 — Diplomatic missions of the People's Republic of China abroad, including embassies, consulates, and other permanent missions, shall represent the State abroad and safeguard the interests of the State. The head of a diplomatic mission shall represent the State in the receiving state.

Chapter III — Foreign Relations Objectives and Tasks

Article 12 — The People's Republic of China shall safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core. The People's Republic of China shall uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, safeguard the basic norms governing international relations, and maintain international fairness and justice.

Article 13 — The People's Republic of China shall promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, safeguard the common interests of all mankind, uphold and practice the common values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom, and promote the common development of all countries.

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Article 14 — The People's Republic of China adheres to the principle of sovereign equality of all states, respects the right of the people of all countries to independently choose their own social system and development path, and opposes hegemonism and power politics.

Article 15 — The People's Republic of China shall promote the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative, develop economic, cultural, scientific, technological, and other exchanges and cooperation with foreign countries, and promote mutual benefit and win-win outcomes.

Article 16 — The People's Republic of China shall actively participate in the reform and development of the global governance system, safeguard and implement multilateralism, and promote the development of the international order in a more just and reasonable direction.

Article 17 — The People's Republic of China shall carry out international cooperation in such fields as responding to climate change and protecting the ecological environment, and promote the building of a clean and beautiful world.

Chapter IV — The Foreign Relations System

Article 18 — The People's Republic of China shall establish diplomatic relations with foreign countries in accordance with the law. The establishment, suspension, and termination of diplomatic relations shall be decided by the State Council in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and laws, and shall be announced to the public.

Article 19 — The People's Republic of China shall conclude or accede to treaties and other international agreements in accordance with the law, and shall perform in good faith the obligations of treaties and international agreements.

Article 20 — The People's Republic of China shall, in accordance with the law, determine which treaties and international agreements apply within the territory of the People's Republic of China and to its citizens. No treaty or international agreement that is contrary to the Constitution or the fundamental principles of the laws of the People's Republic of China shall apply within the territory of the People's Republic of China or shall be binding upon its citizens.

Article 21 — The People's Republic of China shall participate in the activities of international organizations and multilateral mechanisms in accordance with the law. The People's Republic of China shall safeguard the authority and role of the United Nations, actively participate in and promote multilateral affairs, and strengthen coordination and cooperation with international organizations.

Article 22 — The People's Republic of China shall, in accordance with the law, adopt necessary measures to protect the safety, security, and proper functioning of its diplomatic missions and personnel abroad, as well as the lawful rights and interests of Chinese citizens and legal persons abroad.

Article 23 — The People's Republic of China shall authorize and regulate the activities of foreign diplomatic missions and consular posts within its territory and the activities of international organizations and their representative offices within its territory, and shall provide necessary facilitation and protection in accordance with the law.

Chapter V — Safeguarding the International Rule of Law

Article 24 — The People's Republic of China shall safeguard international law and the basic norms governing international relations. The People's Republic of China shall, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, perform its international obligations, safeguard international peace and security, and promote international cooperation.

Article 25 — The People's Republic of China shall have the right to adopt, in accordance with the law, measures that are commensurate with the actual circumstances and necessary, to counter or restrict any act

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that violates international law or the basic norms governing international relations and endangers the sovereignty, security, or development interests of the People's Republic of China.

Article 26 — The People's Republic of China shall have the right to adopt necessary measures to protect the lawful rights and interests of its citizens and legal persons from infringement by foreign states or individuals, and shall have the right to pursue claims against foreign states or individuals in accordance with international law and the domestic law of the People's Republic of China.

Chapter VI — Supplementary Provisions

Article 27 — The foreign relations activities of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macao Special Administrative Region shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the basic laws of the respective special administrative regions and the relevant laws of the State.

Article 28 — The provisions of this Law shall apply to foreign relations activities conducted by the relevant authorities of the Taiwan region within the scope authorized by the State, where consistent with the One-China Principle.

Article 29 — This Law shall enter into force as of July 1, 2023.

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